

IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as follows:

Claim 1 (Currently Amended): A suede-finished leather-like sheet which comprises a fiber-entangled nonwoven fabric comprising a layer (I) made of a microfine fiber (A) having an average fineness of 0.5 dtex or less and a layer (II) made of a microfine fiber (B) having an average fineness equal to or less than that of the microfine fiber (A) but 1/1.76 or more than that of the microfine fiber (A), and a polymeric elastomer impregnated in the fiber-entangled nonwoven fabric,

the layers (I) and (II) being superposed one on the other and entangled into an integral composite such that a ratio of the microfine fiber (A) to the microfine fiber (B) is 10/90 to 90/10 by mass;

the surface of the layer (I) being a napped surface made mainly of a raised microfine fiber (A);

the microfine fiber (A) being formed by converting a microfine fiber-forming fiber (a) into microfine fibers, said microfine fiber-forming fibers (a) being drawn in a ratio of 1.0 to 2 times and satisfying the formulae (1) and (2):

$$130 < Sa < 200 \quad (1)$$

$$Fa < 0.8 \quad (2)$$

wherein Sa is an average elongation at break (%) and Fa is an average tenacity (cN/dtex) of the microfine fiber-forming fiber (a); and

the microfine fiber (B) being formed by converting a microfine fiber-forming fiber (b) into microfine fibers, said microfine fiber-forming fiber (b) being drawn in a ratio of 2 to 5 times and satisfying the formulae (3) and (4):

$$30 < Sb < 90 \quad (3)$$

$$1.5 < Fb \quad (4)$$

wherein Sb is an average elongation at break (%) and Fb is an average tenacity (cN/dtex) of the microfine fiber-forming fiber (b).

Claim 2 (Original): The suede-finished leather-like sheet according to claim 1, wherein the microfine fiber (A) satisfies the formulae (5) and (6):

$$130 < SA < 200 \quad (5)$$

$$FA < 1.5 \quad (6)$$

wherein SA is an average elongation at break (%) and FA is an average tenacity (cN/dtex) of the microfine fiber (A), and the microfine fiber (B) satisfies the formulae (7) and (8):

$$30 < SB < 90 \quad (7)$$

$$2.0 < FB \quad (8)$$

wherein SB is an average elongation at break (%) and FB is an average tenacity (cN/dtex) of the microfine fiber (B).

Claim 3 (Original): The suede-finished leather-like sheet according to claim 1, wherein each of the microfine fiber (A) and the microfine fiber (B) is made of at least one polymer selected from the group consisting of polyamides, copolymers mainly based on polyamide, aromatic or aliphatic polyesters, copolymers mainly based on polyester, and acrylic polymers.

Claim 4 (Original): The suede-finished leather-like sheet according to claim 1, wherein each of the microfine fiber (A) and the microfine fiber (B) is made of at least one polyamide.

Claim 5 (Currently Amended): A suede-finished leather-like sheet which comprises a fiber-entangled nonwoven fabric comprising a layer (I) made of a microfine fiber (A) having an average fineness of 0.5 dtex or less and a layer (II) made of a microfine fiber (B) having an average fineness equal to or less than that of the microfine fiber (A) but 1/1.76 or more than that of the microfine fiber (A), and a polymeric elastomer impregnated in the fiber-entangled nonwoven fabric,

the layers (I) and (II) being superposed one on the other and entangled into an integral composite such that a ratio of the microfine fiber (A) to the microfine fiber (B) is 10/90 to 90/10 by mass;

the surface of the layer (I) being a napped surface made mainly of a raised microfine fiber (A);

the microfine fiber (A) satisfying the formulae (5) and (6):

$$130 < SA < 200 \quad (5)$$

$$FA < 1.5 \quad (6)$$

wherein SA is an average elongation at break (%) and FA is an average tenacity (cN/dtex) of the microfine fiber (A); and

the microfine fiber (B) satisfying the formulae (7) and (8):

$$30 < SB < 90 \quad (7)$$

$$2.0 < FB \quad (8)$$

wherein SB is an average elongation at break (%) and FB is an average tenacity (cN/dtex) of the microfine fiber (B).

Claim 6 (Original): The suede-finished leather-like sheet according to claim 5, wherein each of the microfine fiber (A) and the microfine fiber (B) is made of at least one polymer selected from the group consisting of polyamides, copolymers mainly based on

polyamide, aromatic or aliphatic polyesters, copolymers mainly based on polyester, and acrylic polymers.

Claim 7 (Original): The suede-finished leather-like sheet according to claim 5, wherein each of the microfine fiber (A) and the microfine fiber (B) is made of at least one polyamide.

Claim 8 (Withdrawn): A process for producing a suede-finished leather-like sheet, comprising the steps of:

(i) producing a web (I) made of staple of a microfine fiber-forming fiber (a) satisfying the formulae (1) and (2):

$$130 < S_a < 200 \quad (1)$$

$$F_a < 0.8 \quad (2)$$

wherein S_a is an average elongation at break (%) and F_a is an average tenacity (cN/dtex) of the microfine fiber-forming fiber (a);

(ii) producing a web (II) made of staple of a microfine fiber-forming fiber (b) satisfying the formulae (3) and (4):

$$30 < S_b < 90 \quad (3)$$

$$1.5 < F_b \quad (4)$$

wherein S_b is an average elongation at break (%) and F_b is an average tenacity (cN/dtex) of the microfine fiber-forming fiber (b);

(iii) entangling the webs (I) and (II) to form a fiber-entangled nonwoven fabric;

(iv) impregnating a solution or dispersion of a polymeric elastomer into the fiber-entangled nonwoven fabric and solidifying the impregnated polymeric elastomer;

(v) forming a leather-like sheet substrate by converting the microfine fiber-forming fiber (a) into a microfine fiber (A) having an average fineness of 0.5 dtex or less, and converting the microfine fiber-forming fiber (b) into a microfine fiber (B) having an average fineness equal to or less than that of the microfine fiber (A);

(vi) napping a surface of the web (I) of the leather-like sheet substrate to form a raised fiber made mainly of the microfine fiber (A) on the surface; and

(vii) dyeing the napped leather-like sheet substrate to form the suede-finished leather-like sheet.

Claim 9 (Original): The suede-finished leather-like sheet according to claim 1, which forms at least a part of a glove.

Claim 10 (Original): The suede-finished leather-like sheet according to claim 5, which forms at least a part of a glove.

DISCUSSION OF THE AMENDMENT

Due to the length of the specification herein, Applicants will cite to the paragraph number of the published patent application (PG Pub) of the present application, i.e., US 2004/0157037, when discussing the application description, both in this section and in the Remarks section, *infra*, rather than to page and line of the specification as filed.

Claims 1 and 5 have each been amended by inserting that microfine fiber (B) has an average fineness that is 1/1.76 or more than that of the microfine fiber (A), as supported in Example 1 herein, at paragraph [0092], wherein the decitex ratio, i.e., average fineness ratio, is $(9.1 \times 10^{-3})/(1.6 \times 10^{-2})$, or 1/1.76, as shown in Table 1 [0091]. Claim 1 has been further amended by inserting drawing ratios for microfine fiber-forming fibers (a) and microfine fiber-forming fibers (b), respectively, as supported at paragraph [0049].

No new matter is believed to have been added by the above amendment. With entry thereof, Claims 1-10 will remain pending in the application. Claim 8 stands withdrawn from consideration.